

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SCS-03 SCA-01 DHA-02 L-03 SS-15

CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 PA-01 USIA-06

PRS-01 SP-02 H-01 /052 W

-----240957Z 072675 /22

P 240923Z MAR 77

FM AMEMBASSY MANILA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7549

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E O 11652: NA

TAGS: CASC (WIDEMAN, BERNARD)

SUBJ: WIDEMAN CASE

REF: MANILA 3711

1. WIDEMAN HEARING RESUMED THIS AFTERNOON (MARCH 24). SENATOR SALONGA CHALLENGED "EVIDENCE" GOVERNMENT HAS INTRODUCED, CLAIMING MANY OF THE WIDEMAN ARTICLES PRESENTED HAD NOT BEEN CITED IN ORIGINAL CHARGE SHEET. SALONGA ALSO POINTED OUT GOVERNMENT'S FAILURE TO SPECIFY HOW "EVIDENCE" SUPPORTED VARIOUS CHARGES.

2. WIDEMAN WAS ASKED TO DESCRIBE HIS BACKGROUND, INCLUDING EDUCATION AND WORK EXPERIENCE. HE DISCUSSED HIS CHINESE LANGUAGE TRAINING AND WORK AS NAVAL OFFICER, INCLUDING SERVICE AS ADMIRAL'S AID IN TAIWAN. AFTER THIS RECITATION, COMMISSIONER REYES WISCRACKED: "AH, CIA." SALONGA ASKED HIS CLIENT WHETHER AS JOURNALIST HE SUBSCRIBED TO MARAL AND ETHICAL CODE. WIDEMAN REPLIED HE SUBSCRIBED TO PROFESSIONAL CODE, AS WELL AS TO MRS. MARCOS' RECENT STATEMENT DURING HER UN SPEECH ABOUT ETHICS, INCLUDING TRUTH IN REPORTING. SALONGA THEN PLAYED TAPE OF MARCOS PRESS CONFERENCE IN WHICH PRESIDENT TOLD NEWSMEN THEY FREE TO REPORT EVERYTHING

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EVEN WHEN IT BORDERED ON LIBEL.

3. LATEST COMMENT IN LOCAL PRESS WAS VALENCIA COLUMN IN MARCH 19 EXPRESS. HE SAID WIDEMAN RISKS CERTAIN THINGS IN HEARINGS. "FOR INSTANCE, SHOULD THE EVIDENCE SHOW THAT HE ACTUALLY INSTIGATED REBELLION AND OVERT ACTS OF REBELLION, HE CAN BE PROSECUTED LIKE ANY OTHER MAN. A CORRESPONDENT

DOES NOT ACQUIRE THE IMMUNITY HE IMAGINES HE HAS -- NO
GOVERNMENT IN THE WORLD, INCLUDING THE AMERICAN GOVERNMENT,
WOULD TOLERATE A NEWS CORRESPONDENT WHO IS AIDING OPEN
REBELLION AGAINST THE STATE. WIDEMAN IS OUT TO PROVE HE
SHOULD BE ALLOWED TO STAY. IN THE PROCESS, THERE ARE NO
GUARANTEES THAT HE WON'T PROVE INSTEAD THAT HE DESERVES
PROSECUTION." BEGIN FYI - WIDEMAN TOLD PRESS ATTACHE HE
NOT DISTURBED BY VALENCIA REMARKS. END FYI.

4. NEXT SESSION SCHEDULED FOR MARCH 29.
SULLIVAN

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 24-Mar-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977MANILA04360
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770101-0010
Format: TEL
From: MANILA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
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Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770327/aaaaawxq.tel
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Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 77 MANILA 3711
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 19-Nov-2004 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3010422
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: WIDEMAN CASE
TAGS: CASC, (WIDEMAN, BERNARD)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odhc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/859df0b2-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009